

parallel with the reign of taste, which was induced by Brunelleschi and his contemporaries to redeem the credit of present time, if not to place the era prominently as one of the most important in the history of architecture. To effect this, materials are, it is true, by no means the only desiderata, but they are at least the food on which art lives. by examining and comparing which, that form can be selected or designed which is really the best for its situation in the artist's judgment, then brought to bear with a full knowledge of the resources open to him.

In complaining, as we did recently, of the deficiency of books of reference of a certain kind, in practical architecture, we ought, perhaps, to have admitted the fact of a rather different state of things in the art. We have, however, desired to see every department of the art and science of architecture, and every species of information required professionally—collected, analyzed, and indexed; and we have thought that, far from injury being done by works on this principle—by inducing superficial knowledge, or entire reliance upon these ends—the result would rather be a much more accurate knowledge of the resources of both art and science, and a clearness of judgment in the selection of them, impossible, whilst memory is burthened with matter which could be equally well preserved in print, and whilst the mind is, by consequence, incapable of that tone of thought which is productive of beautiful works of art. We should like to see volumes formed upon the principle of Durand's, and the other "parallels" of architecture, more frequently in the hands of architects.

Still, in Gothic architecture, much has already been done in this spirit; and the authors of the work now before us have contributed, in no inconsiderable degree, to the knowledge of the subject. They have endeavoured to give us precisely that means of comparison and selection which we have adverted to; and it is a great merit in their elaborate work, that it goes very far to justify its title. We are content to leave entirely out of the question our own feeling, that "An Analysis of Gothic Architecture" would include many details, which may possibly be well known by illustrations, and would require a great number—from the cathedrals, for instance—which have here been purposely excluded,—and are content to notice, that out of the seven hundred and odd examples which the volumes contain, nearly the whole are not to be found elsewhere,—that they are generally given with great clearness, and have been measured, drawn, and zincographed by the authors themselves.* They say, "The examples given in this work have been entirely derived from English churches. Continental Gothic, beautiful as it is in itself, and influenced by the same spirit with our own, cannot be consistently associated with English details: each possesses peculiarly distinctive features, which it is impossible to blend together without serious injury to both. It has also been a principal object of the authors to collect their examples from parish churches only; and to this determination they have adhered, with very few exceptions. Cathedrals, and the larger abbey and conventual churches, have been already amply illustrated, perhaps even to the detriment of the art which it has been the object of such illustrations to advance; for, from the want of proper information upon the subject of architectural details, considered with reference to edifices of various designs and magnitudes, we see, in many churches of comparatively recent erection, numerous features belonging essentially to our cathedrals, and contributing, in the very highest degree, to their appropriate decoration; but which, from the necessarily diminished proportions and general incongruity of effect, appear absolutely ridiculous when introduced into the architectural composition of the smaller edifice." The work, though designed, therefore, for a special purpose, is still not surpassed by any recent attempt, for the ability with which

it has been compiled, or its practical value to architecture.

The illustrative portion of the work is divided into two sections, the first being devoted to an exposition of masonry in its various details, and the second to woodwork and metalwork. The joints of the stones are marked, and the methods of striking the different segments clearly indicated. The work has also an appendix, consisting chiefly of illustrations of windows arranged chronologically. The letterpress is interspersed with woodcuts; and a good index to the illustrations and churches referred to has not been forgotten.

In the introduction it has been explained, that although there is ample reason to know that Gothic architecture was eminently progressive,—that when engaged in repairing, or making additions to their churches, the style then prevailing was invariably and boldly adopted;—yet in certain cases the Gothic architects, "when they had to complete a design left from the first imperfect, appear to have been induced in some instances to mould their work in such a manner as to maintain in the general outline some degree of uniformity throughout the whole." Amongst the examples of this feeling are the nave and aisles of Westminster Abbey, the eastern portion of which is known to have been built between the years 1269 and 1307, and the western portion of which was continued at intervals, between the years 1340 and 1483. So well has the early English character been preserved throughout, that it requires a close inspection, and that by an experienced eye, before it is possible to detect and authenticate the presence of perpendicular work." The windows in the aisles, erected by Henry V., of early Decorated character, might be classified as "Decorated," "did not the customary octagonal and moulded cap of the Perpendicular period occupy the place of the corresponding circular and foliated members, which had the windows really been erected some hundred years earlier, would assuredly have surmounted the bowtels placed in their jambs." Far in mouldings, the Gothic architects seem to have "rejected the slightest symptom of compromise." They "pursued with scrupulous strictness the moulding system of their own times;" thus, whilst bands in corresponding positions on the piers were inserted by the architects of the Perpendicular period, they departed not only from the outline, but the size of the original, and whilst they encircled the nave pier with shafts, the number, instead of four, became eight, and they were united to, instead of detached from, the pier. In the arading, beneath the windows appears a similar system.

The characteristics and peculiarities of window tracery are treated of at some length, and that complete acquaintance with the subject which is requisite, ere the dates of many examples can be determined, is shown by reference to "windows, undoultedly constructed during this transition (to Decorated) period," which are some of the "manifold experiments which were tried and rejected before the perfect decorated window was produced. Thus, at Rickenhall Church, Suffolk, the east window of the south aisle, which is decidedly of the same date with the other windows (temp. Edward I.) exhibits almost every peculiarity of perpendicular tracery." "At Ervington Church, Leicestershire, in the north aisle, are two windows still more curious; of these, the western window might be regarded as a fine specimen of flowing tracery, were it not for its soffit cusping, the invariable test of early work; the ornaments, also, with which it is richly studded, are a mixture of the decorated ball flower, with the dog tooth, and marks of the Early English period. The composition of the east window is even more remarkable, and indeed contradictory; it consists in its general design of a series of equilateral-headed arches springing from small shafts with delicately carved foliated caps of pure decorated character, and the upper part of the tracery is divided by super-mullions and transoms into two octo-foliated squares, and a row of tre-foliated lamerent lights. Thus, in these two windows, evidently both of the same date, are displayed peculiarities characteristic of the three great periods of Gothic architecture, the early English soffit cusp, the decorated foliated cap, and the perpendicular super-mullion and tracery-transom. Such phenomena afford

ample scope for conjecture. Shall we say that William of Wykeham first introduced perpendicular tracery, when we find every one of its essentials in a window of the time of Edward I? Shall we not rather conclude, that in their endeavours to arrive at perfection in tracery, the early builders, in the course of their experiments, actually invented perpendicular tracery, proceeded to a partial development of its peculiarities, and finally rejected it as unworthy?"

Besides "windows," other heads treated of in the work, are "clear-story windows," "belfry windows," "turret lights," and "spire lights," and under that of "construction of tracery in windows," the theory of its constant formation upon arrangements of equilateral triangles is ably argued. "Its equilateral triangularity may be pronounced an essential characteristic of Gothic architecture. In the outline of the canopied windows, doorways, and niches of a decorated Gothic structure, and in the prominent position assigned to its buttresses and pinnacles, we may recognize this characteristic no less than in the form of its traceries and diapers, its pavements and carved monuments." Reference is also made, incidentally, to the third volume of THE BUILDER, in which we gave some illustrations of the Lodge in Rushon Park, Northants, which exemplifies the use of the equilateral triangle applied to plan, gables, and the most minute details, "in a manner too remarkable to be here altogether unnoticed." Under the head of "mouldings," the method of their application to the different planes on doorways, and generally, their great importance in the Gothic style compared with the styles of classic architecture, are pointed out. In treating of the mouldings of capitals, it is shown that the capital consists of three distinct parts, viz., "the head-mold, the bell, and the neck-mold. The head-mold consisted of few members." The bell, when not foliated, generally consisted of a group of mouldings in the upper part, which were united to the neck-mold by a beautifully undercut and gracefully curved outline, or occasionally the bell was double, consisting of two different groups." The heaviness observable in some modern capitals is principally owing to the neglect of the arrangement of those features, the mouldings of the bell being sometimes brought to the same projections as those of the head-mold, whereas "a close examination of ancient examples will establish, as a general rule, that the head-mold was the most projecting member." "We might regard a Gothic capital as consisting of three circular pieces of stone: the lower one a thin slab, out of which the neck-mold would be produced; the second, a thick block, projecting considerably over the first, would form the bell; and lastly, another slab at top, somewhat thicker than the first, and projecting the most of the three, out of which would be cut the head-mold."

The remainder of the letter-press in the first section is devoted to doorways, piers, and archways, panelling, buttresses, jambs, crosses, fonts, &c., and has some very picturesque illustrations. In the second section, devoted to wood-work and metal-work, the remarkable timber-roofs of this country are described and classified, and amongst the illustrations to this part of the work are some remarkably fine examples. We have, however, said enough to shew the value of the Messrs. Brandon's work, one produced with an amount of labour seldom given even to subjects of this engrossing nature, and we can only regret that the recent decease of one of its authors, before adverted to, will check, as it must, the completion of the design,—to illustrate the architecture of the middle ages, of which the numerous illustrations in the work before us may be regarded only as the commencement.

FALL OF A BUILDING IN BORDEAUX.

The French papers mention that on the 8th inst. a large building in construction in the Rue Lagrange, at Bordeaux, about 50 yards in length, which had been raised to the height of 45 feet, suddenly fell, and buried a number of workmen under its ruins. Several men were killed. The accident is said to have been caused by the insufficient solidity of the foundation, the ground on which it was laid being for the greater part of the year covered with water.



*We include this amongst the merits of the work, less because the amount of labour increases the credit due to it, than because a character of authoritativeness is given to the work, prepared, not to be ascribed, where the inaccuracies in the several stages of reducing, and transferring, which are sure to occur when details are employed, entail errors not always discoverable at the proper moment, and which every person engaged in the production of illustrated works will at once comprehend.